

Projects with Industry Program (PWI) (CFDA No. 84.234)

I. Legislation

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112), as amended by P.L. 102-569 and P.L. 103-73, Title VI, Part B, Section 621 (29 U.S.C. 795g) (expires September 30, 1997).

II. Funding History

| <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Appropriation</u> | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Appropriation</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1970 | \$900,000 | 1988 | \$17,000,000 |
| 1975 | 1,000,000 | 1989 | 17,350,000 |
| 1980 | 5,500,000 | 1990 | 18,765,000 |
| 1981 | 5,250,000 | 1991 | 19,445,000 |
| 1982 | 7,510,000 | 1992 | 20,390,000 |
| 1983 | 13,000,000 | 1993 | 21,571,000 |
| 1984 | 13,000,000 | 1994 | 22,071,000 |
| 1985 | 14,400,000 | 1995 | 22,071,000 |
| 1986 | 14,547,000 | 1996 | 22,065,000 |
| 1987 | 14,070,000 | 1996 | 22,065,000 |

III. Analysis of Program Performance

A. Goals and Objectives

The PWI program supports projects with private industry to create and expand job and career opportunities in the competitive labor market for individuals with disabilities. Projects promote the involvement of private industry through Business Advisory Councils (BACs), which identify competitive jobs and career opportunities and the skills needed to perform such jobs. Projects create practical job and career readiness and training programs, and provide job placements and career advancement.

B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals

Services Supported

Projects are required to provide job training in realistic settings, job placement, career advancement services, and, when necessary, postemployment services to help individuals maintain employment. Services to employers can include job-site modification, equipment modification, and distribution of rehabilitation technology.

Each grantee must develop a BAC, which must have representation from private industry, organized labor, and individuals with disabilities and their representatives. The BAC is responsible for identifying job and career advancement opportunities within the community, identifying the skills necessary to perform the jobs and careers identified, and prescribing training programs designed to develop appropriate job skills for individuals with disabilities.

Strategic Initiatives

The 1986 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act provided for mandated site visits of project grantees, which began in FY 1989. Each year 15 percent of PWI projects (selected randomly) are visited and evaluated with respect to their compliance with the evaluation standards and progress toward achieving the goals and objectives outlined in their grant applications. If weaknesses are identified, technical assistance is provided. Through corrective action plans, grantees that have marked weaknesses are targeted for additional technical assistance until the project is functioning satisfactorily.

In 1997, the Rehabilitation Services Administration plans to propose new indicators that measure grantee performance on the evaluation standards. The proposed indicators will increase the program's focus on outcomes, and may include measures of the proportion of individuals with severe disabilities who participate, the proportion who had been unemployed for the six months prior to receiving services, the job placement rate, change in earnings for individuals served, cost-effectiveness, and job retention.

C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness

In FY 1995 and FY 1996, grantees were awarded points based on their performance on nine indicators: the proportion of individuals served who have severe disabilities, the proportion who were unemployed at least six months prior to entry, the average cost per placement, actual costs compared with projected costs, overall placement rate, actual placements compared projected placements, average change in earnings, proportion of individuals placed who have severe disabilities, and proportion of individuals placed who had been unemployed. (For a full description, see 34 CFR Part 379, Subpart F.)

Analysis of the performance data for 1995 indicates that 94 percent of the projects met their performance objectives. In accordance with program regulations, all projects that failed to meet the minimum successful score on the performance indicators were given the opportunity to demonstrate improvement in their performance by submitting data for the first six months of the next fiscal year. Of the seven that initially failed, one was in its final year of funding, two had ended at the end of the previous year, three passed after submitting data for the next six months, and one was defunded. Grantee performance on key indicators includes the following:

Placement rate

PWI programs placed 13,029 individuals in competitive employment in 1995, up from 11,604 in 1994. The overall placement rate for 1995 increased to 68 percent of individuals all clients served.

Individuals with severe disabilities

In 1995, 15,486 PWI participants were individuals with severe disabilities, a total of 81 percent of all served. Both the number and the proportion are increases from the year before. Of these individuals with severe disabilities, 67 percent successfully found jobs, a rate just below the overall PWI placement rate.

Individuals who were unemployed

In 1995, 13,192 of all individuals served (69 percent) had been unemployed for six or more months prior to obtaining PWI services. PWI programs successfully placed 66 percent of these individuals, up from 62 percent the previous year.

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| Cost per placement |
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Average cost per placement decreased from \$1,707 in 1994 to \$1,598 in 1995, despite increases over the same period in the numbers and proportions served who were individuals with severe disabilities.

IV. Planned Studies

None.

V. Sources of Information

1. Assessment of the Projects with Industry Program (Washington, DC: Advanced Technology, Inc., April 1983).
2. Evaluation of the Projects with Industry Program (Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc., January 1986).
3. Compliance Indicators for Projects with Industry Program.
4. Program files.

VI. Contacts for Further Information

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